



The Warren

UNDERGRADUATE REVIEW



MERRITT
TORCHIA
MACKAY
SHORT
PALM
MCFADDEN
LEDDY
MORRITT



STAFF PHOTOGRAPH 2011 / 2012

<i>Editor-in-Chief</i>	Liam Sarsfield	<i>Drama Editor</i>	Simone Brodie
<i>Vice Editor-in-Chief</i>	Amelia Nezil	<i>Poetry Editor</i>	Megan Hyska
<i>Executive Editors</i>	Patrick Close Patrick Murry Jamaal Hyder (acting) Morag St. Clair	<i>Philosophy Editor</i>	Jamaal Hyder
<i>Chief Copyeditors</i>	Cameron Butt Naomi Smedbol	<i>Nonfiction Editor</i>	Liz Snell
		<i>Criticism Editor</i>	Cameron Butt
		<i>Fiction Editor</i>	Megan Welsh
		<i>Visual Arts Editor</i>	Theresa Slater

The Warren Undergraduate Review is an annual publication lovingly compiled by undergraduates at the University of Victoria. Submissions must be made electronically at <http://thewarren.uvic.ca>.

All submissions are processed by an executive editor and then blind-read by the editors. With some exceptions, the work approved by the editors is printed in the journal. If you don't think the journal is good enough, it's your own fault for not getting involved.

The Warren Undergraduate Review is graciously funded by the University of Victoria's English department, the faculty of humanities, the faculty of fine arts, and the greater community. Special thanks to assistant copyeditors Jenny Chan, James W. Leddy, Cosmea McGovern, and Evelyn Shaw.

From the Editors

Convincing your best friends and acquaintances to work long hours for no financial return is a lot easier than you would think—if you have the right friends.

Just as some people are motivated by adding lines to their resume or by a sense of status garnered from the titles afforded by ailing volunteer organizations, others simply want to build something expansive and meaningful. Some are motivated by ideas like openness and friendship.

I have been tremendously fortunate to have worked with these sorts of people during my tenure as Editor-in-Chief of this little magazine.

Your time at this university isn't about your resume. It isn't about being trained for the workforce. It's about having the time to think rigorously about things that genuinely matter. It's about making good friends, good art, and kissing pretty people on the mouth. I hope that I helped you do at least one of these things.

Passing off this project is more heart-wrenching than I can communicate, but, holy shit, this has been amazing. If I eat any more cake my teeth will rot out. So, so long, mysterious faces.

I will continue to publish nonsense and, soon, start a new, larger magazine. If you're interested, keep in touch at oakpress.ca.

Publishing *The Warren* would not have been at all possible without Dr. Jamie Dopp and Dr. Robert Miles, both to whom I owe a large personal debt. Thank you, you two.

Liam Sarsfield, *Editor-in-Chief*

On an unusually warm night in the summer of 2009, Liam, Morag and I sat around my kitchen table and talked. We were on our second bottle of wine and the berries on the table tasted increasingly delicious. We were new friends, though you wouldn't know it: we spent most days together and our manifesto could have been, Be Honest, Cry Often.

On this particular night, Liam had an idea that would change our undergraduate lives and, ultimately, our friendships as well.

"We should make a journal," he said, and because we always made a point of disagreeing with each other, Morag said, "You're drunk," and I said, "Balls."

But he persisted and we opened a third bottle of wine and by the end of the night we only disagreed on what we were going to call it.

Now, years later, the bunnies are gone. In a couple of months, I will be too. But the warrens are probably still down there.

Thank you, as always, to our incredible editorial team, especially Liam, Morag, Pat-Squared and Jamaal. Thank you to our copyeditors, who did the impossible. Thanks also to all of you who submitted. And to J'aime for chicken soup when I needed it.

Amelia Nezil, *Vice Editor-in-Chief*

Amanda Merritt	Upper Campbell & A Recipe for Grief <i>poetry</i>	5
Bianca Torchia	On Philosophy <i>interview</i>	8
Jory MacKay	“Our Emily” and the Politics of Memorialization <i>criticism</i>	12
Ottlie Short	Another Way of Telling <i>photography</i>	16
Emma Palm	With Leo <i>photography</i>	20
Dan McFadden	From Expulsion to Infection <i>criticism</i>	21
James W. Leddy	Florence, Italy <i>fiction</i>	25
Jay Morritt	On Poetry <i>interview</i>	30
	The Old Union & Mouse Body, Clover Point <i>poetry</i>	32
	Contributors	34

Amanda Merritt

Upper Campbell

The lake is low,
a cool velour squatting among toppled
trees. Rot-culled and buried, their severed
vinyl rings rise like typists' keys.
These veined and knotted roots
grip the parched earth
where its skin splits, and the wind-dusted
so-long submerged forests
are ring-worn with dirt.

The lake fills.
The Piper calls and his rats drop,
drown themselves in the empty undercrofts.

It's the east-shore gate that opened,
the mouth of the gold river
that flooded the land, and whorled
between the boles—tendrils opening
like so many wings.
The leveled fossils, husked and skinless,
float like anchored bodies, dredged and grey,
where dark hands had stitched,
stretched hide, spun in the story of the water drum,
whose blunted heavy beat
pounds, now, so far below the surface.

And slowly the tide recedes, the lips
of the shoreline sink, the wine
bottle blue curdles,
and the menarche of algae stains the lake.

A Recipe for Grief

You balm your palms with saffron—
lifeline ruddy now, like a burn.
Chalk chokes the heart-line,
dusts that vulnerable spot
on your wrist where
Armenian veins branch, splinter—
red, like you've been massaging a heart.
You braid your heavy hair
and wind it and wind it on top of
your head. Rope and shadows of rope:
a mail headdress for your coal veil.

The house shows you no sorrow.
The shingles warm and snow slides off
in packs. The shades leak lean silver
into the living room, which spins on
drifts of dust. Day burns
with its own tension,
radiant as fired steal. Snow
makes everything brighter.

The muscle on your counter
has seeped a small river.
You extract the knife,
salt the incision with thyme
and wipe your wrist
beneath your eye.
It is tough meat tonight.

But even still, it's loud: those vain,
tired beats. The atrophied
walls falter, ragged like a wing-torn bird.
And the gutter's small, incessant
stream of water scores the air,
makes you think: soon
the leaves must be cleared.
That was never your job.
And you drive the knife into the septum even deeper.

Two halves now, splayed like a fig,
splayed and gutted and you wonder:
what makes a heart begin.

Your hand stops.

The dog, digging, in the yard. Something
beneath the snow and your bitter heart—
rolled with rosemary, peppercorn
and lemon—almost slips from your hands.
You rush out, the heart
secured against your hip. In the snow
the outline of a wing. You bend,
slowly, reverently and scoop
the frozen Dunnock into your right hand,
washing the saffron away
in streaks.

Bianca Torchia

On Philosophy: An Interview Conducted by Jamaal Hyder

Bianca Torchia is a fourth-year student completing her final semester of an honours degree in philosophy, with a minor in applied ethics. Her interests include philosophy of law and international law, applied ethics, and political philosophy. She is currently working on the relationship between narrative and justice in the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

WARREN: The first thing I want to ask you is the worst question one can ask a philosopher: what is philosophy?

TORCHIA: Yeah, that is an awful, awful question. This is something that I have a hard time with as someone who does more socially-informed philosophy. . . . I think at a very basic level, you go into philosophy being able to ask any question you want. I think philosophy is about there being no parameters. As long as you are saying something interesting, addressing an interesting problem, you've got yourself a philosophical work. Of course, there is a methodology involved: you're reading certain people, you're drawing from certain sources. And then I guess the other thing is that there is a standard of rigor involved.

WARREN: So when you talk about reading certain people and drawing from certain sources, are you saying that a key feature of what defines philosophy is participation in a certain tradition in which you are drawing from people who have identified themselves as philosophers?

TORCHIA: I think this is where [you and I] differ. You always talk about it as a philosophical tradition, whereas I continually talk about it as participating in a conversation: one of the longest conversations that has ever taken place. Philosophers are people who have never necessarily met, but are responding to each others' ideas. As long as you are trying to engage in that conversation in whatever tangential way you can, then there it is: you're doing philosophy. And I think that also sets up parameters for what it is to do good philosophy because you have to engage in it like you would any conversation on the street. You need to be speaking the same language; you need to be caring about what the other person is saying; you need to be charitable in understanding the points they are making. You can't just waltz in and stomp all over the place and think that's what it is to communicate.

WARREN: I think that you are right in that when I talk about participating in a tradition, it starts to sound something like the things you do in religious life—like rehearsing a ritual—and I think it is right that philosophy isn't ritualized in that way. Talking about philosophy as a conversation may be the better analogy.

TORCHIA: I think the tradition analogy presupposes some sort of progression. If we have pretensions in philosophy, they are pretensions of progress. . . . Whatever you think the goal is—finding out the “Truth,” or whatever—I just think of it as continuing the conversation, communicating, making yourself clear about where you are coming from. . . .

WARREN: It seems like when you talk about philosophy as a conversation, you are talking about it as a participatory activity rather than a theoretical exercise. Certainly there is theory in philosophy, but that isn’t what philosophy consists in. What do you think the relationship between theory and practice is in philosophy?

TORCHIA: Well, what do you mean “theory”? I just don’t find that distinction very informative.

WARREN: Between theory and practice?

TORCHIA: I am sure you could draw out that kind of distinction, but in the midst of it, when you’re trudging through the philosophical bog, the lines are very murky. For myself, these lines, they seem impossible to draw. What would that distinction even look like?

WARREN: It seems that there is a way of thinking about philosophy as purely theoretical, as theory in isolation where the virtue of a theory is merely aesthetic. It is pleasing because all its parts work nicely together, but it doesn’t have anything to do with a way of living, with a practice.

TORCHIA: Yeah, and I hate that. . . . You’re talking about ideal theory and I don’t deal in those wares. I think there are a lot of problems with doing that kind of stuff. Maybe it looks a lot different if you are coming from the world of classical epistemology or metaphysics, but from where I come from—in terms of the philosophy I do, when you’re doing social theory, when you’re doing political philosophy—making nice pictures for yourself is effectively masturbatory. You’re telling a nice story and I don’t know how that could relate to actual people in the actual world. When you’re talking about what it is to lead a good life or what it is to have a just state, I don’t think those stories are going to be very informative. That has always been the problem with ideal theory. . . .

When I started off in philosophy, I was only interested in doing ethics because I thought that was where the action was, and I have since fallen out of love. . . . because of the way ethics is done. Modern ethics is informed by thought experiments—intuition pumps—which lead to these small analytical quibbles that turn into big books. . . . When you are doing ethics these days, it seems like you are just wading through all of this uninformative stuff. . . . When you’re talking about what it is to lead a good life—how you should treat other people, how you should treat yourself, what kind of duties we have to other people—these are big and important questions, and they’re worth answering, but I am not sure modern ethics is doing a good job. Philosophers get weighed down in certain details. . . . People write books and books on one sentence in Kant and it feels like we have lost track of what it is to ask these questions.

WARREN: Extending the analogy of philosophy as a conversation: do you think that part of the problem—getting caught up in uninteresting questions—arises from the philosophical conversation being a closed one, in the sense that you gain entrance to the conversation by being indoctrinated into the discipline? It seems like that indoctrination is part of what makes us lose sight of why we were asking those questions in the first place.

TORCHIA: Yeah, I think it is a difficulty that in order to talk to philosophers you need to be able to speak the language. In order to speak the language you have to have absorbed a certain amount of the literature and understand the rules of participation. I think at that point you are too far into it and [that] people get caught up in doing philosophy as it is practised. . . . Most of the stuff that comes out is just doing the same stuff over and over again. . . . It is hard for someone to come in from the outside and rattle the cage.

WARREN: Do you think it is possible to survive philosophical indoctrination without losing the perspective that you were bringing to the table to begin with?

TORCHIA: That's an interesting question. Of course, you can't help but get swept along but you are never going to totally lose the things you were interested in and the questions you think are important. I think the way you pose those questions will evolve and your stance may change. You may [even] find that your position was just untenable. I think what philosophy really does is make you better at talking about your position. Maybe you had a bunch of intuitions about what it is to be good. Someone raised in a religious background is going to have way different intuitions than someone raised on a hippy commune. I think at some point the perspective you came into philosophy with and what you take from philosophy will marry into a cohesive view. I don't think people pick up doctrines that don't adhere to their fundamental values.

WARREN: Between the worldview you come into philosophy with and that ultimate marriage with the philosophical doctrines you take up, do you think there is a period of internal conflict?

TORCHIA: I am always reminded of this story about Peter Singer, who is a philosopher with a reputation for being a hard-ass about what one ought to do in certain situations. One of the lines he takes is that we shouldn't waste resources on elderly people who are near the end of their lives. He thinks we are morally obligated to cut off the expenditure of resources and effectively let people die. When his own elderly mother ended up in the hospital, he talks about looking at her in that situation and thinking, "How can I possibly live up to those obligations?" This is why I have a problem with ideal theory. It is one of the unfortunate features of doing philosophy in a vacuum that it is really easy to talk about this kind of stuff, but when the wheels hit the road it is really hard to live up to these kinds of obligations. . . . What I have found most valuable about doing ethics recently, and the most interesting, is doing criticisms of ethics as a whole. . . . Talking about why thought experiments and ideal theories don't work. The interesting conversations aren't about what it is to have a good life. They're about how we can talk about what it is to have a good life when the methods we are using are meant to pump people's intuitions, when those intuitions don't actually map onto the world. Or using these thought experiments where you think about whether you would kill one person to save five. A lot of times in ethics, people want their theory to give them a way to come out of these imagined situations unscathed, but that's just not the way the world works. You are thinking about an awful situation and it is going to stay awful.

WARREN: Do you think then that thought experiments are problematic idealizations in that they don't—and perhaps can't—include enough features to make them like real situations?

TORCHIA: I totally think that is right. We use thought experiments in ethics as criteria for judging whether an ethical theory is right—whether it can account for all these situations and make you feel okay about it—but I don't think you are ever going to feel okay about it. You are never going to walk away from killing one person to save five and feel okay about it. I think philosophers tend to be bad at thinking in terms of how the world actually works. These are awful situations and they're awful for everyone involved, and you are never going to walk away feeling alright about them.

WARREN: But are there benefits to doing philosophy?

TORCHIA: That is a tough question to ask someone in the midst of a difficult semester, but there is a lot of freedom in this discipline and that is really nice. I get interested in things and get to see what kinds of ideas come from those interests. . . . At the end of the day, I am really happy with some of the work I have produced and it is really good mental exercise.

WARREN: Do you feel that, on a personal level, it has made you more able to navigate your world?

TORCHIA: I think I have developed all this language that accurately describes the way the world is, and [that] makes me feel like I can communicate certain things a lot easier, but communicate to whom? . . . There aren't that many people who are skilled in that language, so it only pays off in the world of philosophy.

WARREN: What about problems that don't involve communicating with others? Do you think philosophy has made you think more clearly? Do you think you are better at solving problems?

TORCHIA: I am really inclined to say yes because that is what we take ourselves to be doing. There are these epic, fundamental problems that we have been talking about since the very beginning of philosophy, but unfortunately, when you start unravelling these problems, you realize they are a lot more complicated. . . . I don't think I am better at solving problems. I think, if anything, philosophy has made me happier to live with problems that don't have solutions. The history of philosophy demonstrates that there are problems with no solutions. We are still talking about free will and what it is to have a good life, but the conversation continues and I am more comfortable living with those kinds of problems.

Jory MacKay

Tying Person to Place: Our Emily and the Politics of Memorialization

On October 13th, 2010, a larger-than-life bronze statue of artist and writer Emily Carr was unveiled on the grounds of the Empress Hotel in Victoria, B.C. The statue, which was commissioned by the Parks and Recreation Foundation of Victoria, is entitled *Our Emily* and depicts an elderly Carr seated on a rock with an open sketchpad on her lap, her Javanese monkey, Woo, on her shoulder and her dog, Billie, at her feet. Alongside the statue is a bronze book that gives a brief biography of Carr and acknowledges the major contributors to the project. While the piece stands as a memorial and a commemoration of one of Canada's greatest artistic figures, it also stands as a representation of a specific image of Carr, one drawn from what Raymond Williams would call a "selective tradition" (Hjartarson 5). In his article "Wedding 'Native' Culture to the 'Modern' State," Paul Hjartarson draws on the theoretical work of Williams in order to show how the use of a "selective tradition" serves to re-establish the hegemonic order in times of crisis. While Hjartarson argues that the need to "reaffirm the 'pre-shaped present'" comes from a "perceived crisis" in the hegemonic order, the statue of *Our Emily* does not display a need to reaffirm the "pre-shaped present," but rather displays a need to solidify which image from the shaping past will be used. In the case of Emily Carr, whose own autobiographical writing and identity is well-documented yet notoriously ambiguous and distorted, the need to create an identifiable "Our Emily" is used as a way to secure the "shaping past's" role in creating a "pre-shaped present." Following Hjartarson's argument, which states that recalling any person or event from early Canada is inherently a political act, this paper will explore how acts of memorialization, such as the installation of the *Our Emily* statue, become perpetual acts of recalling that serve to solidify an otherwise ambiguous "shaping past" for the good of the hegemonic order. An examination of the discrepancies between Carr's autobiographical representation of herself and the image of her in the *Our Emily* statue finds that a very specific image of Carr was chosen, one that negates her active and somewhat controversial youth, and one that conveys the most favourable "biographical image" of the artist to the people of Victoria.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines a memorial as "something by which the memory of a person, thing, or event is preserved, as a monument, a custom, or an observance," or "the perpetuated knowledge or recollection (of something); remembrance, recollection." The memorial of *Our Emily* acts as a perpetual recalling of the specific image of Emily Carr that was chosen by the statue's artist and the Victoria Parks and Recreation Foundation. Considering the fact that sizable donations for the statue were made by the Federal Department of Canadian Heritage and the B.C. Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Arts, it is clear that the project was supported by the hegemonic order in Canada both at the provincial and federal levels. Furthermore, the project was created by Alberta-based sculptor Barbara Paterson, who is most famous for her *Women are Persons* sculpture, which

commemorates the “Famous Five” group of women who fought for women’s rights and is currently displayed on Parliament Hill. These examples trace a clear connection between the hegemonic order of Canada, the memorial, and the artist who created it.

Williams, in “The Future of Cultural Studies,” argues that “you cannot understand an intellectual or artistic project without also understanding its formation” (Hjartarson 8). Because an act of memorialization is almost always dependent on the subject having passed away, Paterson’s obvious choice for information on Carr, and the inspiration for the memorial, comes from biographical and autobiographical writings. Yet the varying contexts and biographies available raise the question of how one chooses which image from the “shaping past” is memorialized. In her book, *This Woman in Particular: Contexts for the Biographical Image of Emily Carr*, Stephanie Kirkwood Walker seeks to explore what she calls the “biographical image” of Emily Carr that has emerged from the accumulation of biographical narratives (2). While Walker’s analysis focuses on Carr’s role as a religious figure, she offers significant insight into her role as a cultural icon and as a part of Canada’s “shaping past.” Walker contends that through a “repeatedly recreated biographical image,” Emily Carr has become “cultural knowledge” and a “token in our economy of meaning” (14). Walker illustrates how the many differing representations of Carr make her “a functioning site for social, cultural, and religious exploration” (21). In this sense, the biographical image of Emily Carr has moved beyond the scope of a single person’s life and has entered into the collective culture and knowledge of our society. Carr’s life and work have become ingrained in Canadian culture, and are a cultural space in which to explore Canadian national identity. With this in mind, it can be seen that any act of “recalling” Carr for the express use of future generations is a political act that will have a far-reaching influence on Canadians.

As a subject, Carr’s “biographical image” is one laden with ambiguity and distortions of truth. In *A Totem of Narrators: The Autobiographical Voices of Emily Carr*, Richard William Pickard explores the many narrative voices of Carr’s autobiographical work, focusing on *Klee Wyck*, *The Book of Small*, and *Growing Pains* as representative of Carr’s own personal narrative. Quoting Heather Henderson, Pickard argues that “the writing of any autobiography necessarily involves a process of selection: the autobiographer chooses those events from his past which will form a story, a ‘personal myth’” (7). Indeed, in the case of *Klee Wyck*, Carr’s movement away from truth and chronological order clearly demonstrates her desire to portray a creation story of her personal identity more in the style of a *künstlerroman*. For example, Carr’s self-proclaimed “fifteen-year-old school girl” self in the story “Ucluelet” was in reality a twenty-six-year-old Carr (31). In fact, there are so many discrepancies between Carr’s representation of herself in her autobiographical writing and the facts of her life that author Edythe Hembroff-Schleicher devotes an entire chapter of her book *Emily Carr: The Untold Story* to rectifying these untruths and shedding light on Carr’s distorted self-representation. However, Pickard argues that “Philippe Lejeune’s concept of the ‘autobiographical pact’ defends the autobiographer’s right to ignore the requirement of truth imposed by the model of the biography” (16), and suggests that “the truth as an autobiographer might express it need not be what happened so much as it needs to be the autobiographer’s perceptions of how events occurred” (8). In the case of Carr, this excuses her distortions of reality and instead asks us to delve beyond the surface of her writing and look at the motivations behind her stylistic choices.

Pickard believes that this stylistic choice of Carr is because of her belief that “distorted appearances express the reality within” (5), and cites a passage from *Fresh Seeing* where

Carr, in regards to her painting, describes favouring the representation of “the spirit of the thing itself rather than its surface appearance; the reality, the ‘I am’ of the thing, the thing that means ‘you,’ whether you are in your Sunday best or your workday worst” (4). As Pickard notes, “the autobiography can only contain a selection of so-called facts, not the totality of them” (6). In this sense, authors effectively create their own “selective tradition” as a means to represent themselves. This fact is reflected in Walker’s own analysis that “the literary text is an ‘important site for the struggle over meaning through the formulation of narratives which articulate women’s changing concerns and self-perceptions” (20). Carr’s ambiguous and varying choices of self-representation in her autobiographical writing show her changing concerns over how to properly express herself in writing, and Carr’s autobiographies become environments in which to work out these issues of self-representation. However, Carr’s own changing self-perception ends up problematizing the “selective tradition” that becomes her memorial as the degree of selectivity becomes twofold: first, from Carr herself as she historicizes her own life, and second, from the readers, who select from her autobiographies the elements that best suit the “biographical image” they wish to perpetuate. Carr’s choice of representation of what she saw as “the spirit” of herself in books such as *Klee Wyck* is lost when this second degree of selectivity is imposed. When readers or artists create their own “selected tradition[s],” they supersede the autobiographer’s attempt to express what they feel are their most true and honest identities.

When one looks at the statue of *Our Emily*, it becomes increasingly hard to discern why this particular “biographical image” of Carr was chosen to represent the artist for future generations of Canadians. In his foreword to the 1951 educational edition of *Klee Wyck*, Ira Dilworth gives his own personal impression of Carr, one which he believes most people in Victoria shared, as “an eccentric, middle-aged woman who kept an apartment on Simcoe Street near Beacon Hill Park, who surrounded herself with numbers of pets—birds, chipmunks, white rats, and the favourite Woo—and raised English sheepdogs in kennels in her large garden” (20). For all intents and purposes, the *Our Emily* statue draws heavily on this image of Carr, focusing on her tie to Victoria and her identity as “an eccentric, middle-aged woman,” rather than looking at the larger aspects of her life, such as her innovative artistic style and her progressive view on indigenous culture and art. While Walker suggests that the genre of biography is a “genre superbly suited for heroic gestures and achievement” (6), and can “grant particular lives significance within larger contexts of meaning” (2), the image chosen of Carr for the *Our Emily* memorial is not one that illustrates her heroic achievements. Carr’s seated position surrounded by animals is far from the heroic “biographical image” of Carr that prevails in her writing. Stories such as “Salt Water” and “Kitwancool” from *Klee Wyck* offer “heroic gestures and achievement[s]” from Carr’s life, and paint a picture of her as a strong-willed, intelligent, and active woman. However, *Our Emily* takes the life out of Carr and instead depicts an unmoving and subdued version of the artist, one who is later on in her life and has moved past the vigour and passion of youth. This subdued image of Carr negates any controversy surrounding her role in Canada’s history and instead celebrates her as a quiet and unassuming artist.

Accompanying the *Our Emily* statue is a plaque that offers a short biographical history of Carr which begins with “Victoria-born Emily Carr is British Columbia’s most famous artist.” In this short sentence, a clear tie between person and place is created by the specific identification of Carr as a native Victorian. Through the use of what art historian Alois Riegl calls “a monument of writing,” the intention of the hegemonic order to place Carr firmly in history as a citizen of Victoria is made clear. In “The Modern Cult

of Monuments: Its Essence and its Development,” Riegl defines a monument in its “oldest and most original sense” as “a work of man erected for the specific purpose of keeping particular human deeds or destinies (or a complex accumulation thereof) alive and present in the consciousness of future generations” (69). Applying this definition to the context of the *Our Emily* statue, the specific tying of Carr to Victoria can be seen as perpetuating this specific aspect of Carr for future generations. The image and memory of Carr that the hegemonic order wants to keep alive is one of an old lady surrounded by her animals, not one of the many other available biographical images of Carr that may be more politically charged or even offensive. Even the title itself denotes possession over the identity of Carr—she is not Canada’s Emily Carr, but rather “our” (the citizens of Victoria’s) Emily.

As a part of our cultural economy, Emily Carr’s “biographical image” is an important representation of early Canada and by examining the many ambiguous, varying, and distorted biographical images of Carr, it becomes clear that the choice of which image of her is memorialized will influence future generations. The image chosen for the *Our Emily* memorial acts to solidify the hegemonic order’s selective tradition of Carr, and effectively takes all the energy out of the life of the artist by depicting her as an old, sedentary woman. *Our Emily* becomes a political act of recalling that furthers her connection to Victoria and denies her role as a cultural ambassador for indigenous art in Canada. By denying Carr’s own “selected tradition” of herself, the artist and those involved in the *Our Emily* statue take away Carr’s right to be memorialized in the fashion of her own perception of her life as illustrated in her autobiographical writing, and instead use her role as a “token in our economy of meaning” as a way of perpetuating their own version of Carr that will justify and perpetuate their ideal version of the pre-shaped present.

Works Cited

- Dilworth, Ira. “Foreword to 1951 Education Edition.” *Klee Wyck*. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 2003. 19–29. Print.
- Geddes, Ann. “Artist/Sculptor Barbara Paterson.” *Gift for Life: The Parks and Recreation Foundation of Victoria*. October 2008. Web. 18 December 2011.
- Hjartarson, Paul. “Wedding ‘Native’ Culture to the ‘Modern’ State.” *ReCalling Early Canada*. Eds. Jennifer Blair, Daniel Coleman, Kate Higginson, and Lorraine York. Edmonton: U of Alberta P, 2005. 1–34. Print.
- “Memorial.” *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Oxford UP. Third edition: June 2011. Web. 19 December 2011.
- Pickard, Richard William. *A Totem of Narrators: The Autobiographical Voices of Emily Carr*. MA Thesis. The University of Victoria, 1993. Print.
- Riegl, Alois. “The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Essence and its Development.” *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*. Eds. Nicholas Stanley Price, Mansfield Kirby Talley, and Alessandra Melucco Vaccaro. Los Angeles: Getty, 1996. 69–83. Web.
- Walker, Stephanie Kirkwood. *This Woman in Particular: Contexts for the Biographical Image of Emily Carr*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier, 1996. Web.

Ottolie Short

Another Way of Telling: Artist's Statement

The following artist statement comes from an interview conducted by Visual Arts Editor Theresa Slater.

"The latest [series] that I am working toward is photographing houses. I grew up in the countryside [in England]; we had a farm on top of a hill. I felt very isolated for most of my life. I went to boarding school way out in the middle of nowhere. . . . Moving to Canada, I had read *Archie* comics, so that was my idea of North America; Oak Bay sounded like California to me. The biggest [difference] was the houses being so close together, the living situations so close together. You are allowed to look at the houses, but what is happening inside the house? I've been looking lately through the windows of houses. I look at all these people walking through [them].

It's something about that—being captured—so close to people [but] trying to ignore what's going on over there. [She gestures over the fence]. This seems like what I've been edging toward. . . .

As a photographer, I don't put myself into the scene. . . . I am drawn to the outside looking in. I think I realized that for the first time a few years ago. I was very socially anxious when I first came to UVic. . . . I am not comfortable being on the chair being photographed. I am an observer. Pointing the camera at someone and taking a picture is okay.

I am looking for things that are timeless, to an extent. I've always liked photographs that look like [they are from a] different time, rather than this particular present. I'm just not interested in things that seem really new. . . . it seems like there is a softness around things that are worn. The things that are worn are important; there is human presence."



Arnold St, Victoria.



Brooke St, Victoria.

Arnold St, Victoria.





Arnold St, Victoria.



With Leo by Emma Palm.

STATEMENT: An attempt to locate myself in my grandparents' rural lives and history. I seek to ground myself in relationships and a lifestyle that seem to be quickly slipping away. Shot on 35mm film.

Dan McFadden

From Expulsion to Infection: Retracing the Viralized Body

In Judith Butler's landmark text *Gender Trouble*, she claims that the demarcation of the body "is not initiated by a reified history or by a subject. This marking is the result of a diffuse and active structuring of the social field. This signifying practice effects a social space for and of the body within certain regulatory grids of intelligibility" (2544). The implication of this argument is that the construction of the self is inherently fluid and diffuse; the boundaries of the body are created through a matrix of social discourses and normatives. What this means for the individual is that his/her "self" is a product of this discursive matrix, and that this is apt to be altered through changes in the social milieu. This paper will examine how the surface of the body has become a site of discursive change in current Western society, tracing the social narrative of prescriptive hygiene to relationships of power and control. I will argue that the diffuse set of discourses (public, media, legal) surrounding the sanitation of bodily fluids has, beyond its claims for public health, become a mechanism for rewriting the body as a site of biological weakness that needs to be cared for by state apparatuses (medical institutions and legislated hygienes). Key to this argument is Butler's notion of the abject and how social perceptions alter what bodily sites and products are considered abject. Michel Foucault's interrogations of the power of discourse will also be used to elucidate how the discourses surrounding the surface of the body and the fear of infection are used as a tool by modern institutions to create docility in the body public and lend power to the institutions that propagate and "solve" the problems of infection via submission to a scientific discourse that is demonstrably contradictory. The impetus and evidence for this interrogation of cleanliness rests on a number of widespread social changes that have occurred in the last decade: the rise of antibacterial culture; new legal enforcements pertaining to public urination and expectoration; and, finally, the fear of pandemic, which became manifest in the swine flu and SARS hysterias and was recently commercialized in Steven Soderbergh's film, *Contagion*.

Before I begin, I wish to make a note of clarification: I am not positing that the surface of the body does not harbour potentially pathogenic entities. My intention is to interrogate that system that deigns to control and regulate microbes, and thus, inseparably, our bodies and ourselves, and to show that it is founded on contentious science with a great amount of power at stake. The proliferation of antibacterial soaps, for example, has become a site of scientific contention as multiple studies have connected antibacterial culture with the increase of drug-resistant bacteria (Aiello). Excessive cleanliness, justified via public science that claims that cleanliness equates with healthiness, may in fact be detrimental to public health. In basing these narratives on a world that is unobservable (the level of microbiology), a great amount of fiction can be wrought as public knowledge of viruses and bacteria emerges primarily through secondary texts. The deployment of the science of sanitation is shown to be at odds with actual scientific communities; it has become

an ideological apparatus.

Now to treat the body—in *Gender Trouble*, Butler describes how the notion of the “abject” comes to inform the limits of the body: “the boundary of the body as well as the distinction between internal and external is established through the ejection and transvaluation of something originally part of identity into a defiling otherness” (2546). This section will focus on how the abject, that defiling otherness, gets incorporated into the narrative of social hygiene, and how this narrative is employed. The most recent and publicized incidents of the legislation of the abject are the laws passed that criminalize public urination, defecation, and expectoration (2006, 2007, 2008).¹

Although urine, feces, and saliva have long been considered abject, the assimilation of these substances into the legal code demonstrates an increased social regulation over the fluids of the body. The rationale behind these bylaws is not simply that these products are abject: the underlying concern is public health. This concern for health shows that there is a growing perception of bodily fluids as being not only dirty, but also physically dangerous. The base fear that both creates and sustains this discourse is the notion that the fluids of another can, and probably do, vector disease. These substances have been transvaluated not only into abject substances in leaving the body, but also into infectious substances that reconstitute the world as dangerous on a microscopic level. What this shows is not only the fear of the otherness that is the abject product of one’s body, but the fear of the abject otherness from the body of an other: a double otherness. The most abject, then, is that which was never part of the self, which originates from the other, and may come into contact with the self and become part of (infect) the self. The fear of the accidental incorporation of another’s bodily waste and its potential for detriment to the health of an individual can be seen as a microbial penetration of the “I” with a destabilizing power that is perceived to manifest in physical symptoms (sickness). By turning the abject into the infectious, the sociobiological perception of the exterior shifts; outside becomes a landscape of infection and, more importantly, a place where infection, and thus the body, needs to be policed for the good of each individual and the public. In the perceptive turn from disgust to fear, we can see the implementation of discourses that regulate the function of the body.

Now I would like to investigate how the power/knowledge that is prescriptive hygiene becomes enacted on both the literal and metaphorical surfaces of the body. The regulated fear I describe in the previous section is observably rampant in modern Canadian society. Antibacterial hand sanitizer is to be found in almost every public (and, indeed, private) sphere. The necessity for constant handwashing with antibacterial soap is decreed on signs in bathrooms, imploring the urinator to “help reduce the spread of infection.” The ability to control the body via legislation and suggested edicts thus becomes married to the chemical control of non-human biological entities and vice versa. This creates the illusion not only that bacteria and viruses can be controlled with the intervention of chemical science, but also that the body itself can be rendered invulnerable by strictly following the guidelines of cleanliness and proper hygiene. The deployment of science as an institutional power mirrors Foucault’s account of the institutional regulation of sexuality:

One had to speak of it as a thing to be not simply condemned or tolerated but managed, inserted into systems of utility, regulated for the greater good of all, made to function according to an optimum. Sex was not something one simply judged; it was a thing one administered. It was in the nature of a public potential; it called for management procedures; it had to be taken

charge of by analytic discourses. (24)

The shift of sexuality suggested here from an unregulated plurality to deliberate administration is mirrored by the shift of hygiene from a personal/aesthetic choice to a socio-medical necessity. The creation of a “clean” society has become the charge of the government and is enacted both through the legal system and a multitude of other institutions (such as medicine, capitalism, and institutionalized education). The site of this administration is in the regulation of the surface of the body itself. Butler, drawing on the work of Mary Douglas, describes the surface, the boundary, of the body as such:

Douglas suggests that all social systems are vulnerable at their margins, and that all margins are accordingly considered dangerous. If the body is synecdochal for the social system per se or a site in which open systems converge, then any kind of unregulated permeability constitutes a site of pollution and endangerment. (2545)

Butler correctly identifies the boundary as the key site; it is the convergence of hygienic discourse on the body that has the power to shape it. By claiming the surface of the body as a territory of control, institutional powers are able to exercise power over it in the name of aegis. If society behaves metaphorically as a body, as Douglas suggests, then by controlling the margins of the body, institutions are further granted power to control the borders and demarcations of society. The body's surface is thus more than a simple boundary; between the interior and the exterior lies a fluid social space that is constructed imperceptibly. By this I mean that there exists the cultural perception of a microscopic struggle that is always occurring on the surface of the skin, a constant occupation of the skin by invisible germs. This occupation becomes most concentrated on the surface of the hands; even though this is perceived as an impermeable (non-mucus membrane) site, constant attention is paid to maintaining its sterility. Hands epitomize this double encoding as they are at once a part of oneself, while at the same time being dangerous and harbouring foreignness to the self; although not sick, they are both infected and infectious.

The fear of the self's surface is expounded culturally through ideological constructs, such as Steven Soderbergh's 2011 film *Contagion*. I wish to talk about this film as it contains many pertinent manifestations of the social fear of infection. It draws upon the still-present hysteria that was created in the wake of the SARS and swine flu outbreaks. *Contagion* silently cites paranoid histories that were never actualized (there was no global plague), but whose landscape of potentiality morphed the world into one that is always conscious of the coming pandemic and the fluids of the other. The film's structure mimics the mass fear of surfaces; Soderbergh's obsession with the depiction of vector surfaces (sites where the virus travels from the inert surface of the world to the individual's hands) traces how individuals come to be infected by a contagion “lying in wait.” The character of Dr. Erin Mears embodies both the fear and power that is present in our culture of cleanliness. A lead virologist tackling the outbreak, she is depicted as knowledgeable, specialized, and infallible. Her constant reminder to her underlings to avoid touching their faces with their hands shows both her paranoia in thinking of her hands as infected, partitioned away from the rest of her totality, and a mastery of this infected self that alters her material being (she demonstrates admirable “self”-control in never touching her own face). A large part of the film is dedicated to showing how governmental bodies react to an epidemic, and this

depiction is of course glowing. Not only are science, academia, and government shown to be the sources of a cure, they are also humanized and shown to be deeply integrated in and necessary to society at all levels. This sort of narrative naturalizes the notion that humans need institutions that are capable of taking care of the body; knowledge of virology and microbiology is specialized, and thus power is conferred to those who lay a claim to this knowledge. Those institutions that can make the healer/protector claim are given an almost absolute power over the body. They are given the ability to alter the ontology of the body, in turn creating subjects subject to prescriptive discourses of cleanliness that foster docility in those that submit—those who utter “cure me” or “protect me”—which allows for the institutional care and construction of the body.

The power affects and effects of hygiene are chimerical and myriad. Not only do these discourses foster the creation of docile and malleable subjects, but they also lend power to the social structures that already exist. The gradual shift of cleanliness from the personal sphere to that of institutions demonstrates a growing fear of the world that is both born from science and remedied by science. Scientific and medical discourses give us both the problem and the cure; they share with us the discovery of threats, and then prescribe us preventative measures and treatments. In this cycle of nullification, power is harnessed in the bodily submission to the discourses that are then able to take control of the pacified and vulnerable body and subject.

Notes

1. City of Calgary “Public Behaviour Bylaw 54M2006” (2006), City of Vancouver “Health Bylaw No. 9535” (2007), City of Edmonton “Public Places Bylaw 14614” (2008).

Works Cited

- Aiello, A.E., E.L. Larson, and S.B. Levy. “Consumer Antibacterial Soaps: Effective or Just Risky.” “It’s Your Health—Antibiotic Resistance,” Health Canada. Web. 4 March 2011.
- Butler, Judith. “From *Gender Trouble*.” *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* 2nd ed. Eds. Vincent B. Leitch et al. New York: W.W. Norton, 2010. 2540–53. Print.
- Contagion*. Dir. Steven Soderbergh. Perf. Matt Damon, Kate Winslet, Jude Law. 2011. Warner Bros. DVD.
- Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction*. New York: Vintage, 1990. Print.

James W. Leddy

Florence, Italy

You see that I'm in one of my moods and likely to get worked up, but nevertheless, I'll attempt to tell you a story—I accept your challenge. It's only an effort of imagination, after all: there's no magic in it. Although I admit it's still an effort. Therefore be warned: if I stop abruptly, it's only that my condition requires me to dam the flow at intervals.

I should also tell you that I don't shy away from moralizing in my stories: this is stark fiction, after all—not nebulous poetry. And since the story I'm about to share may strike you as too simple, or even crude, to warrant deep reflection, allow me to tell you the moral up front, so that you don't misconstrue my meaning: in love—and I think you'll find the principle can be applied elsewhere—we must take nothing for granted. All we hold dear can slip through our fingers if we turn, even for a moment, so pay attention to what's in front of you, dear reader, for God's sake! What you may think of little value is rich—richer than you'll ever know. From here on, you must never turn away! Oh, I'm already getting worked up—I'm in the spirit! That indicates something's imminent!

But wait! First I must set the scene: a wretched young man, lately spurned by his beloved and in the full throes of despair, here recalls an August afternoon in the fair city of Barcelona, when young hearts would beat and bend with the ease and vitality of love's supple nonage:

“On Carrer de Wellington, behind the zoo, I told you I could finally say it—yes, it was love—though you had known me just four days. And you, my little *cosita*, agreed with whisper and nod—acquiesced in near silence, confirming what I didn’t doubt. And then when you leaned your head on my shoulder and I smelled your knotted hair, not floral, but scented of earth and forest, some primal air (it was the ballad of an ape—a slow and tiresome lament) spooked you, and I pulled you close, as if to protect. ‘I told you I was no coward,’ I joked. ‘You thought it nonsense, but it’s true.’

“Oh, it’s easy to laugh now, but always when you seized my arm a little tighter and pushed yourself up onto tiptoes, pressing your body toward mine for a kiss (*Oh! These memories burn like hell! These pangs!*), my heart aped a lion’s. I knew it was love—not illusion!”

Damn! This lover’s passion makes me faint. Oh, what an effort! But I still need to tell you about how “the trams endlessly screamed past in both directions.” No, that sounds wrong. Trams aren’t that fast, are they? Although I do recall being surprised by the first one because the lines were half concealed... Oh, it’s all turning black—my memory fades! Oh, weak English heart! I will continue when I can summon my strength again, although next time, I may subdue the mood. I must be careful with this heart.

* * *

Wasn’t it Madrid where they first met? Yes, it was Madrid—sometime in late summer, I believe: “It seemed real in the early days—in Spain. As I recall, it was on Calle de Lavapiés

that you first saw me.

“Earlier that afternoon, I had done up a budget and found I would need to curtail my spending sharply if I was to last the summer. Twenty-two euros per day would have to cover my meals, accommodation, train tickets, and incidental expenses. To put this reduction into perspective, I’d accustomed myself to spending upward of seventy euros per day in Italy, where I passed the first month of my trip.

“I had already spent seventeen euros on accommodation, so I had only enough for dinner and laundry that evening. But when the tour guide pressed me into coming along, I just couldn’t bring myself to say I didn’t have the money—not in front of all those spoiled backpackers. I’m too proud. And anyway, what would be the purpose of my travels if I could only afford to sustain myself? One must make the most of a visit abroad—No, I should be honest: for no other reason than to avoid feeling embarrassed and excluded, I went along.

“And then afterward at the bars, I drank to work up my courage. You know, it really speaks to my inexperience that I thought it appropriate to kiss you when we had only just begun dancing. To tell the truth, as I waited for you in the Plaza de Tirso de Molina the next morning, I gritted my teeth, remembering how disgusting I had been.

“But I was glad that you still came and took me to the Prado, because you had been before and would act as my guide, and because I had intended to see it anyway. *The Meninas, Saturn’s Son, May Third*—and what a surprise to see Bosch there.

“The next day you took me to El Escorial, and love made my budget irrelevant.

“No, no, that glosses over it. I must be honest: from that day, you supported me. I explained to you that I was broke, and you said you didn’t mind helping me—or, I suppose, your father didn’t mind. A few days later you took me with you to Barcelona. Yes, of course I’m ashamed—*me, a prostitute!*”

Oh, quite devoid of passion, yes, but so much the worse! My shame! Ah, you must know it now. Haven’t you figured it out? That this—is my story, too? Oh, I have revealed my shame! I want to say a simple thing—but words betray! Pity the novice: humbled by prose!

And if I wrote in verse? But verse distorts the measure—diminishes shame, yet lewdly augments pleasure—plays inverse! It pits the orchestra against the theatre—never comes direct, but sets the hero’s pyre among crass interludes! It fans the flames fair—pinches the globe as it turns! The poet must be barred, the lush—shot through the cannon! Verse? No—I’m no coward: I’ll not sing away my sorrow. I’ll not make the truth per verse.

Then must I always betray myself—stab my own back, do myself violence? Be raiment but false comfort? Shall my own waltz derail me—leave me trampled underfoot? My offal scavenged and scraped from the lines—the virgin spirit all mixed up?

No—no! I refuse to say more than I mean. I want to give an honest account—omit nothing, and neither invent. (But I fear there’s no other way: cloaked and dancing, sprightly, I skip, trip—weave the dizzy track—oft depart from the straight and narrow—all the while, sing it slack. Turn, turn, and turn again—build the labyrinth—bait the bull—plump the song—sing it overfull).

Lord, give me strength: I’m losing my religion—I’m demoralized! I fear I’ve lost the plot! I’m all muddled and weak. Oh, clumsy spirits, I’ll try, but no... I’ll never reach the bar.

Waiter—a cocktail!

* * *

Enough of practice: here I sit once more, pen in hand, ready to take responsibility. I'm prepared to shed those false voices and tell it like it is—cover all the angles. Let there be no pretense now and no preamble. I'll pick the story up in Florence, one year later. It was our last holiday together—a brief tour of Italy, ending in Rome:

“What do you think of Florence?”

“I don't know yet.”

“A first impression?”

“I don't like *Italians*.”

“Why not?”

“They're too macho. And they're mean to foreigners.”

“That's just nonsense. But what about *Florence*? Aren't you anxious to explore it?”

“I suppose it can wait—it's a dead city. I just want to get to the hotel.”

“Oh, try to enjoy yourself—this is meant to be a vacation. And how can you say Florence is dead? You're lucky to have me as a guide—I'll bring it to life for you: I'm a real Renaissance man! I know everything about Florence.”

“...”

“What do you know about Florence?”

“Very little. Not as much as you, I'm sure.”

“Do you know what the river is called?”

“No.”

Nevertheless, the Arno stayed his course—still flowed. The sun was in his (the sun's, not the Arno's) decline, and as they (the couple, not the Arno and the sun) crossed the bridge with their (the couple's) luggage, he (the man, not the sun—arguably both) looked out on the water, resolved to witness the Arno worry his (the Arno's, not the sun's nor the man's, or rather, either of the first two would work, or both; however, the last would make an interesting turn—*Damn! What's happening?*) final glimmers, as was his (*the man's! the sun's?*) wont the summer before. Obviously, the woman dragging a suitcase out of necessity saw nothing—her name is also Florence, or Flora—henceforth, Flo—*what?*

Who blunts my quill? Who skews it right? Builds leaning towers? Oh, I couldn't keep it up: the symptom of a weak heart. Oh, infirmity! Who does what? Who's who? Are no answers forthcoming? Truant pronouns—curse the cowards behind! Must they my disasters double? Need I write, “The sun was in the sun's decline”? Oh, too many characters, too much to measure, too much to master... Ah! Ask a doctor—maybe too much fondling of a treasure makes it crumble? This slattern jewel has been worn by many fingers! I feel it false when I think and dwell—is it right under our nose? I've an inkling—a harlot's scent doth linger, and 'tis floral!

Oh, Flo, I rinse my hands—this quill betrays you, not I. Oh, ink here flows, not blood! Flo, ink needs flow hence, and be no more—penetrate never—never spill to the floor. Oh, Flo, though it inks you well, the quill draws no fluorescence, only blackens the font! Only rots the sheath! Oh, and that, Flo, is what makes me think you dim—and a whore! Oh, your memory is now expired, soiled—invalid!

Oh, this heart! Hang me and have this over with! Leave me in peace! I need quiet—silence! Ah—if not for this cursed condition, I could conquer any subject. But oh! I can't try harder. Perhaps I am a coward—I'll sheathe my quill—for protection.

* * *

Piazza San Calisto, Trastavere—far from the Spanish Steps. The street magician cheered us that evening, though your money was almost gone. Hard up, we drank wine on the

steps of the fountain and envied the tourists dining on the piazza. Do you remember when the old shopkeeper woman praised me for pulling the cork? "Bravissimo! Un vero uomo!" We were hysterical over it—our thoughts were one that night. When the bottle was gone you went and found us another, and soon we grew fond of the piazza. I knew you would come to feel at home in Italy—and so you did. Rome had won you over.

After some hours, the awnings were folded and tents broken down; chairs were collapsed and diners dispersed; the lights were all closed and lips tightly sealed—only glib spirits would loiter till dawn:

Night seemed fluorescent—labyrinthine—but prudent silence soon policed the square: unravelled with stillness, the paranoid magician feared his words were being waited upon—his dark secrets and filthy thoughts followed like a thread—disaster loomed, but for the unsettling interruption of a pair of rowdy Germans in collars and cuffs, hollering at a young siren they pursued down a blind alley, on whom they blew their reds: "*Ciao bella! Wo gehst du hin?* She's trapped—she's trapped now!"—and a clueless waiter, who dumped a tray, poured crusts and *acqua*, minced off, and filled a white glass with red—and a bovine old maid who fell down drunk, milking the mood homogenous—yet the disaster was now imminent: neglecting his charge, the waiter finally swept up and vanished from the labyrinth, ill-serving the magician, who heard thunder cracking universal, and now, utterly deranged, turned into an alley to cow the tipped heifer, engendering sweet nothings, collapsing eternal—so he'd herd. (*Who, me? Who names me? Who works me up? What have you heard? That's no source! I don't trick—perhaps you do! Or they! What do you think I herd? Oh, bull! Oh, bugger! Honest—I just heard the fountain flowing!*)

When the penned herds reached their limits, the catalyst uncloaked and wept slowly back to the square, calves still burning with lactic build-up. He was arrested by silence for an inconceivable act: a speakable, yet unimaginable thing—the coward went too far. He was made to hand over his wand. "You should never have turned into that alley," silence said. "No one transcends the law." He was detained all night with the rambling spirits, trembling with shame in the penitent square; he was sentenced to corrections which erased all the dark—it was the letter of the law, the law of the letter: one and the same—speech must be patrolled. Sympathetic spirits upheld him, calling the crime sensational, the verdict false, the sentence beautiful: the magician became a martyr.

This minor turn seemed to wrest the evening down. All were now safe in the labyrinth. The hunt was over; the herd fell flat. (*The fluorescent phrase turned out transparent black.*) We could finally rest...

You paid for the bus to Termini, which was near enough the hotel (and you paid for that too). The bus rounded Piazza dell'Esedra, such a beautiful place at night, and like a vision to my tired eyes. I don't remember if it happened that night or on some other—it's as dreamy now as it was then—but I must have been in transit, circling the *fontana*, foreign and unnamed—knowing scarcely what I saw, except that it shone and flowed—I couldn't say much else after only one spin—yes, it must have been then that I fell in love with Rome:

Oh, but to compass those astrid waters eternal,
I'd capsized the whole pedestrian world.

The next morning at the post office you were in tears again, Flo.

I didn't know why. I didn't even know she could think for herself—until I saw the letter:

FLORENCE

It's just so disgusting: he thinks only of himself now—his ambiguous delights. No wonder he can't write about me. And that “weak English heart” of his—the “condition”? Complete fabrication. He's just a simple English drunkard: can't stay away from the spirits; subjects everyone to his wild bouts, his fancies, his horrid innuendos—pure decadence. Oh! And that unimaginably infantile humour:

*Have you heard the one about the magician
Who walked through the square and turned into an alley?*

Sure, he wrote a pleasing line or two between blackouts, long drinking jags, and hangovers, but it was always nonsense—or so it seemed to me. The cracked Catholic: *drink* was his religion.

And I'll tell you one more thing—they'll never translate *his* love-letters!

Jay Morritt

*On Poetry:
An Interview Conducted by Megan Hyska*

WARREN: Jay, your own poetry seems characterized by a general economy. I'm thinking of your tendency toward super short lines and a relatively unembellished say-it-as-it-is diction. Where do you think this impetus toward economy comes from?

MORRITT: As far as my favouring the short line goes, I suspect it has something to do with deliberateness. I like the plodding feel of a short line and the weight that each word begins to carry. Maybe it's because I come from an industrial town, an ugly place where life seemed a small thing that lurched forward dutifully, but without any kind of exuberance. Extending that thought (not because I think it's exactly true, but more because I'm enjoying it), I wonder if the spare diction also reflects the way I learned as a young person to locate beauty in very ordinary, often emphatically unpretty surroundings. I spent a lot of time alone as a kid, [doing things] like meditating on the lampshade in my bedroom or the pattern on the throw rug in my grandparents' living room. The short line has a meditative quality I like.

WARREN: Poetry can be an art form cultivated in seclusion. To what extent would you characterize your own work as the product of personal contemplation, and to what extent is it a product of your participation in an artistic community? More generally, what does community do for you as an artist?

MORRITT: This seems to tie in nicely to the last question, doesn't it? I think of my writing as a very solitary practice. Especially lately, my work has become about spending time figuring out what is important to me. I've been looking at my most vivid and long-standing memories and trying, through the poetry, to get at what the bigger themes are that connect them. It's like staring into a pile of ashes and trying to see the wood before it burned. The process seems to have very little to do with any sort of community. That said, I feel a connection with other writers—right now I feel very close to Sharon Olds: the way she uses her family, and particularly her father, to explore big whopping human concerns like love, sex, death, et cetera. I also value my workshop experiences at UVic; when I'm in the classroom, I consider myself part of a community of writers.

WARREN: I'm looking over a selection of your recent poems and noticing the persistence of the first person pronoun. Is the "I" here typically yourself? What do you make of the allegation that "the artist, surveying the actual, constantly intervenes and manages, lies and deletes" as Louise Gluck, another contemporary poet fond of the "I," puts it? Does your own poetry intervene and manage in this way? What are the merits of a first-person pronoun when the poem is not actually autobiography?

MORRITT: I confess—I've always liked confessional poetry. There is just something so powerful that happens when the poet lets me into his personal world and then, through

his mastery of craft and grandness of spirit, he manages to touch something universally human in me—something I was perhaps unaware was within my own capacity to feel or understand. So I like the “I”—when it goes both deeply into as well as beyond the “I,” toward the “thou.” The best confessional poetry is like a stranger that shows up at your door asking for shelter, wearing an expression at once foreign [and] familiar [so] that, for a moment, you almost take him as family. You cannot help but invite that wanderer in. In my own work, the “I” is always, in some fashion, me. Anyone who knows me knows I am a mimic—I do all sorts of voices and characters. I see me in all my narrators. The merit of the first-person pronoun in poems that are not strictly autobiographical is that I can keep my narrator as close to me as possible. Love thy neighbour, et cetera.

Jay Morritt

The Old Union

Every bar
I go to,
there's a nervous-
looking girl
standing
in a blue dress
at the edge
of the dance
floor,
her chest
rising
and falling
in time
with the band.
Tonight,
I'm on a stool
at the Old
Union Pub
drinking bad
beer and worse
whiskey,
thinking of what
I can afford,
watching
as she steps
toward the
bar,
a booth,
the bar,
the door,
the bar,
then back
to where
she stood,
maybe back
to waiting
for a man
who's got some

sense
of where he's
going.
She looks
at me:
the only thing
I know
for sure
is that I have
my keys.

Mouse Body, Clover Point

Sunned mud,
tuft of dry grass

divot I want to press
back to earth.

The cleanup crew,
flies, ants, and wasps

left only the husk
of a small life

to pass into light
water, wind. So lean

Dawson won't even
stop to sniff it.

Just a quick jag
in her step, a nod

and she's off—
chasing again

the red and yellow noise
of the living.

Contributors

James W. Leddy studies English but he's almost done. He also lives in Victoria.

Jory MacKay is a fourth-year English and writing student at the University of Victoria. He has a passion for non-fiction writing and journalism, and has had pieces published in *The Tyee* and *The Martlet*.

There are three things that bring **Dan McFadden** unabated pleasure: beauty, ugliness, and things.

Amanda Merritt is a third-year creative writing student minoring in philosophy. Her focus in writing is on poetry and screenplay. She has had a love of writing since the age of three, since the discovery of Robert Munch.

Jay Morritt is a fourth-year student of writing, in the poetry stream. He has published writing in *Monday Magazine*, *Island Writer*, *This Side Of West*, and *Beside The Point*. He expects a call from *The New Yorker* any day now.

Emma Palm grew up in central Alberta on the farm of her grandparents' homestead. She returns whenever she can in the midst of completing a visual arts degree. Current infatuations include the cottage industry, film, and coffee.

Ottolie Short, born in 1990 in London, England, is an artist working on Vancouver Island. She is currently studying at the University of Victoria in the visual arts program. Her initial inspirations came from the boxes of print and cameras left to her by her father; her work focuses on experiencing life through the record of photographs.

Bianca Torchia is a fourth-year philosophy student who is currently completing the final semester of an honours degree in philosophy with a minor in applied ethics. Her interests include philosophy of law and international law, applied ethics, and political philosophy.

